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THE URBAN DISTRICT OF DISS

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH  
TOGETHER WITH THE  
ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SANITARY INSPECTOR  
FOR THE YEAR 1955

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PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE 1955/56

Chairman :- Councillor R.FOX

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Councillor H.H.W.Cannell. <sup>x</sup>	Councillor G.T.Cole.
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Councillor R.C.Bolingbroke.	

<sup>z</sup> Chairman of the Council.

<sup>x</sup> Vice-Chairman of the Council.

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## THE URBAN DISTRICT OF DISS

The Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health, together with the Report of the Sanitary Inspector for the year 1955.

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Mr. Chairman, and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for 1955.

### I. Introduction.

"I find it better at once to state that there is nothing whatever in the town of Diss deserving the name of a drain. There are many open ditches, stagnant and filthy, and one or two covered channels immediately below the surface of the principal streets; but the place could scarcely be in a worse condition, with respect to any arrangement for the removal of decomposing animal and vegetable matter.

If I were to quote from my minutes, the instances I met with during a minute inspection, they would add about ten pages of sickening detail to this Report on so small a town: and, the words "filthy", "disgusting", "offensive", "stinking", "stagnant", and "injurious" must be often times repeated".

So reported Wm. Lee Esq., Superintending Inspector to the General Board of Health, when he conducted a Public Health Inquiry at Diss in the year 1850.

This was the time of the birth of the Medical Officer of Health in England: the beginning of the great era of "sanitation" when there was a popular notion that diphtheria came from "drains" and malaria was caused by treacherous mists from undrained marshes. But fundamentally the idea was sound for although we now know that communicable diseases are caused by bacteria, viruses, and parasites, we also know that these are commonly spread by poor personal hygiene and that efficient personal hygiene is impossible without a high standard of "environmental sanitation".

Possibly the present generation do not fully realise the extent of the work carried out by your Councillors and their officers since the dark days when Mr. Lee made his scathing comments, or fully appreciate those unspectacular but essential improvements often brought about in the face of public prejudice and in opposition to the fear of the New.

It is generally accepted that Diss is now a healthy Town: there have been no dangerous communicable diseases for a number of years; the infant mortality is significantly small (it has been nil for the past two years); the water supply is excellent, the sanitation reasonably good and housing tremendously improved. But hasn't Diss always been a healthy town? Let us look at the picture, say, fifty years ago.

For our information we can consult the concise but interesting annual reports submitted to your Council by Dr.H.M.Speirs who was your Medical Officer of Health from 1905 to 1935.

Fifty years ago the population of Diss was very much the same as now. There were 947 houses and of these 621 were cottages with rents below £8. per annum. The average number of persons per house was four. Today there are over 1,300 houses and approximately one third of these are Council houses.

Diphtheria was then endemic and occasionally epidemic: in 1904 there were 16 cases, 5 in 1905, and 14 in 1906. In 1907 there were 4 cases of typhoid fever and 9 cases in 1908.

Scarlet fever was much more in evidence: 26 cases in 1904, 12 in 1905, and 48 in 1906. An epidemic of whooping-cough started in 1906 and reached its height in 1908 when it necessitated the closing of the schools. In 1909 a severe epidemic of measles lasted over six months and schools had again to be closed.

In 1904 the infant mortality rate was 186 per 1,000 live births.

These conditions were accepted as normal at the time, and such figures as are quoted above were not considered unsatisfactory.

Some of Dr.Speirs pithy comments regarding his difficulty in keeping the schools open in spite of devastating epidemics are worth quoting:

"I have nothing further to report on re the schools in the Town except to say that the sooner the County Council see their way to do away with the attendance prizes, which are at present given, the better.

Children are so eager to get these prizes, and they know that no medical certificate will be accepted as an excuse for not being there, that they will drag themselves to school in all stages of infectious diseases, and all I can say is that it will become an annual affair to close the schools for every small outbreak of any zymotic disease till this point is rectified". (Annual Report, 1909).

and:

"In my young days if one wanted the day off (from school) one licked the bottom of a new loaf and presented a tongue which looked like a genuine bilious attack. Now a child has only to say he has a sore throat and he can stay away when he likes". (Annual Report 1911).

## II. Administration.

Clerical assistance for your Medical Officer of Health continued to be carried out by the Senior Clerk and staff at the Central Health Office, Norwich, while close touch was maintained with the Diss Office.

The Sanitary Inspector, Mr.E.D.Edwards, whose conscientious and reliable work was much appreciated by your Council, took an appointment at Saffron Walden in August and for the remainder of the year your Council was without the services of a Sanitary Inspector. During this time meat inspection was carried out by a local firm of veterinary surgeons and other essential duties covered by officers and staff of the Council.

At the end of January 1956 your Council was pleased to welcome Mr.I.C.Prowse (whose Report for 1955 is appended) to fill the vacant post.



### III. Legislation

The most important public health legislation was the introduction of the Food Hygiene Regulations, 1955.

These Regulations lay down requirements in respect of:-

1. The cleanliness of food premises and stalls, etc. and of apparatus and equipment.
2. The hygienic handling of food.
3. The cleanliness of persons engaged in the handling of food and of their clothing, and the action to be taken where they suffer from, or are carriers of, certain infections.
4. The construction of food premises, the repair and maintenance of food premises, stalls, vehicles, etc., and the facilities to be provided.
5. The temperature at which certain foods that are particularly liable to transmit disease are to be kept in food premises.

### IV. Vital Statistics.

#### (a) Population

In 1801 the population of Diss was 2,246. There was a steady increase until 1851 (3,637). Since then there has been very little change in the number of inhabitants. In 1955 the population as estimated by the Registrar General was 3,580.

#### (b) Births

There were 64 live births recorded during the year: 34 males and 30 females. In 1954 there were 50 births. The birth-rate for 1955 is therefore 17.8 compared with 14.1 in 1954.

- (c) The number of deaths during the year was 34 and the death rate was therefore 9.5 - almost certainly the lowest ever recorded. In 1954 the death rate was 12.7. 28 of these deaths occurred in the age group 60 to 90 years. There were two deaths in 90-100 age group.

#### (d) Comparability Factor

The comparability factor makes an approximate allowance for the way in which the sex and age distribution of the local population differs from that for England and Wales as a whole. Furthermore, with regard to births the ratio of the national to the local fertility index has to be taken into account. The important factor in the fertility index is the number of women aged 18-44 years in the population as a whole. The comparability factor as supplied by the Registrar General for births in Diss U.D.~~S.~~ is 1.05. When the actual birth rate of Diss is multiplied by this factor the resulting birth-rate can fairly be compared with the birth-rate of England and Wales. The adjusted birth-rate for Diss thus becomes 18.7 compared with 15.0 for England and Wales. In the same way the adjusted death-rate becomes 7.4 compared with 11.7 for England and Wales.

(e) Infant Mortality

As in 1954, the infant mortality rate (deaths under one year of age per 1,000 live births) was nil. The infant mortality rate for England and Wales was 24.9 and was the lowest ever recorded in this country.

It is doubtful whether the foregoing statistics for Diss, in 1955, can ever be improved upon. It is the result, not of any one particular feature of public health, but of the combined efforts of all those workers, medical and lay, who have been active in the welfare of the inhabitants over the past years.

(f) Expectation of life (England and Wales)

In 1841 the expectation of life, at birth, was 40 years for boys and 42 years for girls; in 1910 the figures were, respectively, 52 and 55. In 1954 the expectation of life rose to 68 years for boys and 73 years for girls.

V. Infectious Diseases

(a) Sixty cases of infectious diseases were notified by general practitioners during 1955 compared with eighty-one in 1954. Twenty-seven of the notifications were measles and twenty-seven whooping-cough.

(b) Whooping-cough immunisation of infants (often combined with diphtheria immunisation) continues to be practised. In the early months of life the degree of protection afforded by whooping-cough immunisation is uncertain and is therefore postponed until the fifth to the eighth month of life. Unfortunately it is in the first six months of life that this disease is most dangerous. In England and Wales in 1954, 68.3% of deaths from whooping-cough were in those under 12 months of age, the majority of these in the first six months of life. The whole question of the protection afforded by whooping-cough vaccine is still under investigation by the Medical Research Council.

(c) Diphtheria

In England and Wales the incidence of diphtheria remained much the same in 1955 as in 1954. There were 161 notifications and 11 deaths. It must be remembered, of course, that there were 18,500 cases as recently as 1945 with 722 deaths.

The object of the immunisation campaign remains the same; to secure immunisation of not less than 75% of babies before their first birthday. At the present time the percentage of infants immunised (in England and Wales) is only half this figure, i.e. 36% in 1954 and 38.4% in the first half of 1955.

However, it is satisfactory to know that in Area 5 (Diss, Wymondham, Loddon, and Dapwade districts), 463 children under five years of age were immunised and the births for the year were 577.



(d) Poliomyelitis

There were no cases in Diss during the year and none has been reported since 1953 when there was one case of paralytic poliomyelitis. At the time of writing this report the first immunisations for the prevention of poliomyelitis are taking place. There have been 105 requests from Diss parents for inoculation of their children, but owing to the limited supply it has been possible to inoculate 10 children only. However, it is hoped that those on the register and who cannot be immunised now will receive inoculation in six months time when, it is anticipated, larger supplies will be available.

Commenting on poliomyelitis in his annual report for 1954, the Chief Medical Officer, Ministry of Health, writes as follows:

"It is a disease whose capacity to arouse dread bears little relation to its frequency and fatality. The 1,300-odd cases of poliomyelitis associated with paralysis and 134 deaths which occurred in a total population of some 44 million last year should be compared with the 18,500 cases of diphtheria and the 722 deaths which occurred from that disease as recently as 1945. Poliomyelitis has undoubtedly become associated in the public mind with paralyses of limbs and bodies, and of the use of iron lungs in dire respiratory emergencies. But though thus seeing poliomyelitis in this country in its proper perspective, one cannot regard it lightly. One must always remember the grim experience of Denmark, upon which country, out of a clear sky, an epidemic descended in 1952 causing 5,676 cases of which 2,450 were paralytic, and 262 fatal."

(e) Vaccination

The vaccination rate for Area 5 in 1955 was 62 per cent. In Diss U.D. area vaccinations were 51 per cent. In 1954 the infant vaccination rate for England and Wales was 34.5 per cent. The ideal rate is a 75 per cent vaccination of infants.

(f) Tuberculosis

One new case of lung tuberculosis (detected by the mass radiography unit at Norwich) was notified during the year. The patient was admitted to a sanatorium immediately the diagnosis was made.

In England and Wales mortality from tuberculosis has fallen by 64 per cent for the six-year period ending 1954. But the decline in notifications of lung tuberculosis has been only 14% since 1949. However, notifications of non-respiratory tuberculosis have declined by about fifty per cent since 1942.

Family contacts of cases are X-rayed (unless consent is withheld) and B.C.G. vaccination is offered to those contacts who show no natural immunity to the disease. A Health Visitor from the County Tuberculosis Clinic investigates the living conditions of all reported cases and your Medical Officer of Health takes action, where necessary, for re-housing.

## VI. Cancer

There were 5 deaths from cancer during 1955 and this represented 14% of the total deaths. There were 8 deaths in 1954.

The upward trend of both male and female deaths from cancer of the lung continues at a steady pace from year to year.

In 1954 there was an increase of 2,171 deaths from cancer over the 1953 figure in England and Wales. Of these deaths (2,171) those ascribed to cancer of the lung in males accounted for rather more than one half. In 1954 the sex ratio of male to female deaths from cancer of the lung was 6.2 to 1. In 1925 it was 1.9 to 1.

While there is no conclusive evidence that heavy smoking (more than 25 cigarettes a day or the equivalent in pipe tobacco) causes cancer of the lung, yet the statistical evidence which is extensive and detailed permits a connection between smoking and lung cancer as a reasonable interpretation. No other interpretation has so far been put forward which fits or explains the observed facts. It is not known to what extent air pollution plays a part (if any) in increasing the risk of lung cancer. It is however a fact that the death rate from lung cancer in Greater London is twice that of the rural districts of England and Wales. If a common factor like air pollution was a cause of lung cancer one would expect a close relationship between the incidence of lung cancer in both sexes. This however is not the case: the excess mortality amongst men compared with women is even greater in the larger towns.

What proportion of heavy smokers die of lung cancer? Statistically speaking, if all the members of a cricket team were aged 25 years and all smoked 25 to 50 cigarettes a day then one of them might be expected to die of lung cancer before reaching the age of 75.

It is comforting to note that there were no deaths from lung cancer in Diss in 1955. Perhaps the pure air, or lack of congestion, does help. Even Mr. Wm. Lee, in 1850, had a good word to say about this:

"The town is not densely built, and there are scarcely any close confined courts. The streets are also sufficiently commodious for a town of the size of Diss. The external ventilation is therefore good".

## VII. Housing

Details of work under the Housing Acts are contained in the Report of the Sanitary Inspector which follows this Report.

Action was taken throughout the year to implement the requirements of the Housing Repairs and Rents Act 1954. As a sequel to the general Housing Survey completed in 1954 your Council made orders regarding certain individual unfit houses: eleven demolition orders were made and four closing orders.

New buildings completed in 1955 included sixteen Council houses and seven private houses. There are now over 1,300 houses within the urban district of Diss and approximately one third of these are Council Houses.

At the present time much attention is being given to the question of housing elderly people, for it is recognised that with the increase in the proportion of those aged 65 years and upwards the population is growing more elderly. It is estimated that the number of men and women of pensionable age in England and Wales is over 6 $\frac{1}{4}$  million, a proportion of 1 in 7. Moreover, for every man of pensionable age there are more than two women.



Between the wars 1½% of local authority housing was designed for old people; this proportion has now risen to over 8 per cent, for it is fully appreciated that special accommodation for old people is a necessary social service. If suitable dwellings are available for old people they will be able to remain home much longer than now, consequently they will be happier, more useful members of society, in closer touch with relatives and friends and far less burden on national social services. The provision of specialised housing for the elderly whether by means of flats, bungalows, or grouped dwellings is not therefore a tentative effort to solve a serious social difficulty; any such scheme is by no means a shot in the dark but permits several shots in a perfectly good light.

#### VIII. Water Supplies.

Nearly sixty-eight million gallons were pumped during the year.

Bacteriological and chemical examinations continued to give very good results.

#### IX. Sewage Disposal.

Throughout the year the new sewage treatment works at Victoria Road operated satisfactorily and work continued on the extension of town sewers. The ejector station at Mission Road has not yet been put into service.

Modern sanitation for every house, where this is at all practicable, is the objective. Forty years ago there were approximately one hundred water closets in Diss district. The position has changed considerably since then - but there is still the problem of dealing with nearly three hundred pail closets.

#### X. Health Education

"Public Health administration, in these days, has for its sphere the health of man living in society; its object therefore is to promote and preserve his health by teaching him the principles and practice of healthy and wise living; to protect him from unnecessary and avoidable hazards which may weaken and disable his body and mind or bring him to early and untimely death, and to endeavour to ensure that his later years may not be without some measure of richness, vigour and usefulness". (Annual Report, Ministry of Health 1954).

The most important and avoidable hazard of all is the communicable disease conveyed from man to man as the result of poor personal hygiene. Food poisoning and dysentery continue to show a high incidence in England and Wales; the chain of cases continues because some individuals are not scrupulously clean in their personal habits. The simple act of hand-washing can prevent many a communicable disease from spreading. Indeed many infections could be avoided if a very simple rule was observed - the same rule that governs good conduct in society: keep your mouth shut and your hands clean.

XI. In conclusion I wish to thank the Chairman, the Clerk of the Council, and Members of the Public Health Committee for their continued support and encouragement and for the enthusiastic and efficient help given me by the Sanitary Inspector and Council staff, and by the Clerical Staff at the Local Health Office, Norwich.

I have the honour to be, Mr. Chairman, and Gentlemen,  
Your obedient servant,

*W. J. L. Jones*

DISS URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL - 1955

Table 1. GENERAL STATISTICS

Area (in acres) (including water)	3,628
Estimated Resident Population.	3,590
Rateable Value.	£22,978
Sum represented by a Penny Rate.	£96

Table 2. LIVE BIRTHS

	Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	33	30	63
Illegitimate	1	-	1
Total	34	30	64

Live Birth Rate per 1,000  
of estimated Resident Population.

∅	Diss Urban District ...	...	...	17.8
	Area 5... ..	...	...	14.3

Table 3. STILL BIRTHS

-NIL-

Still Birth Rate per 1,000  
total births.

∅	Diss Urban District ...	...	...	0.0
	Area 5... ..	...	...	20.8

Table 4. DEATHS (All ages)

Male	Female	Total
24	10	34

Crude Death Rate  
per 1,000 of estimated Resident Population

∅	Diss Urban District ...	...	...	9.5
	Area 5... ..	...	...	11.8

Table 5. INFANT MORTALITY (Deaths of Infants under One Year)

-NIL-

Infant Mortality per 1,000 Live Births

∅	Diss Urban District ...	...	...	0.0
	Area 5... ..	...	...	19.0

NOTE

∅ Area 5 comprises Depwade & Loddon R.D's. and Diss & Wymondham U.D's.

Table 6. CAUSE OF DEATH OF INFANTS UNDER ONE YEAR - Diss U.D.

-NIL-

Table 7. CAUSE OF TOTAL DEATHS (Registrar-General) - Diss U.D.

	Males	Females	Total
1. Tuberculosis, Respiratory.	1	-	1
2. Tuberculosis, other.	-	-	-
3. Syphilitic disease.	-	-	-
4. Diphtheria.	-	-	-
5. Whooping Cough.	-	-	-
6. Meningococcal infections.	-	-	-
7. Acute poliomyelitis.	-	-	-
8. Measles.	-	-	-
9. Other infective and parasitic diseases.	-	-	-
10. Malignant neoplasm, stomach.	2	-	2
11. Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus.	-	-	-
12. Malignant neoplasm, uterus.	-	-	-
14. Other malignant and Lymphatic neoplasms.	2	1	3
15. Leukemia, Aleukemia.	-	-	-
16. Diabetes.	1	1	2
17. Vascular lesions of nervous system.	1	1	2
18. Coronary disease, angina.	5	-	5
19. Hypertension with heart disease.	-	1	1
20. Other heart diseases.	3	3	6
21. Other circulatory diseases.	1	-	1
22. Influenza.	1	1	2
23. Pneumonia.	1	1	2
24. Bronchitis.	2	-	2
25. Other diseases of respiratory system.	1	-	1
26. Ulcer of stomach and duodenum.	-	-	-
27. Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea.	-	-	-
28. Nephritis and nephrosis.	-	-	-
29. Hyperplasia of prostate.	1	-	1
30. Pregnancy, childbirth and abortion.	-	-	-
31. Congenital malformations.	-	-	-
32. Other defined and ill-defined diseases.	1	1	2
33. Motor vehicle accidents.	1	-	1
34. All other accidents.	-	-	-
35. Suicide.	-	-	-
36. Homicide and operations of war.	-	-	-
Total	24	10	34

Table 8. NOTIFICATIONS OF DEATHS RECEIVED DURING THE YEAR 1955  
(According to Age Groups)

Diss U.D.	Males	Females	Total
Under 1 year	-	-	-
1 and under 5	-	-	-
5 " " 10	-	-	-
10 " " 20	-	-	-
20 " " 30	2	-	2
30 " " 40	-	-	-
40 " " 50	-	-	-
50 " " 60	1	1	2
60 " " 70	6	1	7
70 " " 80	8	3	11
80 " " 90	6	4	10
90 " " 100	1	1	2
100 and over	-	-	-
Total	24	10	34



Table 9. SUMMARY OF BIRTH AND DEATH RATES

	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
<u>Live Births (per 1,000 pop)</u>	(35)	(51)	(58)	(62)	(47)	(50)	(64)
Diss Urban District.	10.3	14.0	16.8	17.8	13.4	14.1	17.8
Area 5.	14.5	14.9	15.4	15.6	14.3	13.4	14.3
England and Wales.	16.7	15.8	15.5	15.3	15.5	15.2	15.0
<u>Still Births (per 1,000 total births)</u>	(1)	(1)	(Nil)	(2)	(3)	(1)	(Nil)
Diss Urban District.	28.0	19.2	0.0	31.2	60.0	19.7	0.0
Area 5.	27.0	23.0	26.8	28.0	17.1	26.0	20.8
England and Wales.	(Not Published)			22.6	22.4	24.0	23.1
<u>Crude Deaths (per 1,000 pop)</u>	(56)	(50)	(55)	(49)	(44)	(45)	(34)
Diss Urban District.	16.1	13.7	15.9	14.1	12.6	12.7	9.5
Area 5.	13.3	12.1	14.0	12.6	10.9	11.6	11.8
England and Wales.	11.7	11.6	12.5	11.3	11.4	11.3	11.7
<u>Infant Mortality (per 1,000 live births)</u>	(Nil)	(Nil)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(Nil)	(Nil)
Diss Urban District.	0.0	0.0	34.5	32.2	42.5	0.0	0.0
Area 5.	21.0	14.5	27.5	28.8	34.8	7.1	19.0
England and Wales.	32.0	29.8	29.6	27.0	26.8	25.5	24.9

NOTE:- Figures in brackets are the actual numbers for Diss U.D.

Table 10. NOTIFICATIONS OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES (EXCLUDING TUBERCULOSIS)  
(According to Age Groups) - Diss Urban District

	0-2 yrs	3-4 yrs	5-9 yrs	10-14 yrs	15-24 yrs	Over 25	Total
Measles	6	3	16	1	-	1	27
Whooping Cough	5	5	15	1	-	1	27
Pneumonia	-	-	-	-	-	5	5
Food Poisoning	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Total	12	8	31	2	-	7	60

Table 11. INCIDENCE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE DURING 1955 (OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS) - Diss Urban District.

	Quarters				Total
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	
Measles	1	24	2	-	27
Whooping Cough	27	-	-	-	27
Pneumonia	4	-	1	-	5
Food Poisoning	-	-	1	-	1
Total	32	24	4	-	60

Table 12. INCIDENCE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES (EXCLUDING TUBERCULOSIS)  
during last five years - Diss Urban District.

	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
Scarlet Fever.	-	1	-	1	-
Measles.	9	45	1	73	27
Whooping Cough.	50	12	4	3	27
Pneumonia.	2	1	-	3	5
Erysipelas.	-	1	-	1	-
Food Poisoning.	1	-	-	-	1
Poliomyelitis (Paralytic)	-	-	1	-	-
Totals	62	60	6	81	60

Table 13. TUBERCULOSIS (Details of New Cases during 1955)  
Diss Urban District

Age Period	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M	F	M	F
0-4	-	-	-	-
5-14	-	-	-	-
15-22	-	-	-	-
23-34	-	1	-	-
35-44	-	-	-	-
45-54	-	-	-	-
55-64	-	-	-	-
65 and over	-	-	-	-
Totals	-	1	-	-

Table 14. TUBERCULOSIS (NUMBER OF CASES ON T.B.REGISTER AS AT 31.12.55)  
Diss Urban District

	Males	Females	Total
Pulmonary	11	8	19
Non-Pulmonary	2	2	4
Total	13	10	23

Table 15. DETAILS OF NEW CASES OF TUBERCULOSIS FOR LAST FIVE YEARS  
Diss Urban District

	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
Pulmonary					
Male	2	-	-	1	-
Female	2	-	1	2	1
Non-Pulmonary					
Male	-	-	1	-	-
Female	-	-	-	1	-
Total	4	-	2	4	1
Area 5 Total	36	43	24	23	12

Table 16. DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION

The following is the number of notifications of primary and booster injections received during the last six years in respect of Area 5.

	Primary Injections			Booster Injections		
	Under 1 yr.	Total Under 5 yrs.	Age 5-14	Total Under 5 yrs.	Age 5-14	Total
1955	283	463	86	45	251	845
1954	237	486	171	26	983	1,666
1953		493	392	36	1,855	2,776
1952		371	95	15	598	1,070
1951		460	70	9	178	717
1950		487	100	6	447	1,040

Table 17. VACCINATION AGAINST SMALLPOX

Vaccination of children (under five years of age) during the years 1951 to 1955 resident in the District and Area 5, are shown in the following table.

	Diss U.D.					Area 5.				
	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
Number of live births registered.	58	62	47	50	64	617	623	574	560	577
Number of vaccinations recorded. (0 ÷ 4 years).	42	25	18	29	33	496	315	391	375	361
Percentage vaccinated.	72	40	38	58	51	80	50	68	67	62

Table 18. DEATHS DUE TO CANCER - Diss Urban District

	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
Number of deaths	13	13	7	5	10	7	8	5
Percentage of total deaths.	23	20	14	9	20	16	17	14

Table 19. DEATHS DUE TO CANCER - Area 5.

	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
Number of deaths.	83	82	84	86	82	74	87	73
Percentage of deaths.	16.9	16.8	17.3	15.3	16.3	16.9	18.5	15.2



THE URBAN DISTRICT OF DISS  
ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SANITARY INSPECTOR  
for the year 1955

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SEWERAGE, CONSERVANCY AND DRAINAGE

The maintenance of the sewers and sewage disposal works is the responsibility of the Council's Engineer and Surveyor.

The new sewage treatment and disposal works which was officially opened in November 1954, has operated satisfactorily during the year; samples of the effluent were taken for examination and were found to comply with the required standard.

Work continued on the extension of the Town Sewers during the year, and with the exception of the Ejector Station at Mission Road the work is almost complete. It is hoped that the work on the Ejector Station will be completed during the early part of 1956 when it will be possible for a further number of properties to connect to the sewer.

The provision of adequate sewers, and the conversion of existing buildings to a water carriage system of drainage is naturally a slow process, it is hoped however that the number of privies, etc. will decline rapidly during the course of the next few years.

The clearance of night soil, cesspools, and privy vaults has been carried out during the year smoothly and without complaint or nuisance. The Contract for this work is with Messrs. Tovey Transport Ltd., of Cambridge. The conservancy work carried out by the Contractors on behalf of the Council consists of the following:-

290 pail closets cleared each and every week.

30 privy-vaults and cesspools cleared twice per year, (these can be cleared more frequently when requested, on payment of the cost of the additional clearance).

56 visits were made in connection with conservancy and drainage during the year.

The supervision of the reconstruction and alteration of drainage works at existing buildings is the responsibility of your Sanitary Inspector, as is the enforcement of repair, renewal and cleansing of defective or foul drainage systems.

WATER SUPPLIES AND WATER SAMPLES

Main Supply

This is the responsibility of the Council's Water Engineer. Samples from the main supply taken for examination during the year continued to give a result of 'Highly Satisfactory'.

A total of 67,925,800 gallons were pumped during the year.

Other Supplies

Routine samples of well water were taken during the year, and upon bacteriological examination were reported as follows:-

3.samples	-	Highly satisfactory.
2.samples	-	Satisfactory.
1.sample	-	Suspicious.
4.samples	-	Unsatisfactory.

When an unsatisfactory result was obtained, the supply was chlorinated and the occupier advised to boil the water before use. In one instance the well was closed, the occupier having a readily available supply from a Council standpipe.

3 samples of water were taken from the Swimming Pool in the District and were satisfactory.

## PUBLIC HEALTH ACT 1936

### Section 75 (Provision of Dustbins etc.)

33 complaints were received concerning defective or insufficient dustbins, as a result of informal action dustbins were provided or renewed at these premises.

### Section 83 (Filthy or verminous premises)

No premises in a filthy or verminous condition were observed or complained of during the year.

### Section 92 (Nuisances) (Not including matters dealt with under Section 75)

Some 46 complaints of alleged insanitary conditions were received, recorded and investigated. 44 of these complaints were justified but only 28 were matters that could be classed as nuisances under this section the remaining 16 complaints concerning such matters as rodent infestations.

As a result of these complaints 28 informal or verbal notices were served requiring the abatement of the nuisance. 1 Statutory notice was also served and complied with. It was not necessary to resort to legal proceedings in any instance.

A summary of defects remedied is appended.

### Section 167 (Disinfection of premises, articles etc.)

Following one case of infectious disease the disinfection of rooms and articles therein was carried out.

### Section 269 (Control of moveable dwellings)

6 visits were made to sites of moveable and other temporary dwellings. In each case the dwellings were maintained in a sanitary and hygienic manner, with suitable sanitary accommodation and water supply readily available.

2 sites and 4 moveable dwellings were licensed during the year.

## Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949

The work of rodent destruction during the year was carried out very efficiently by one part time Rodent Operator at a low cost to the Council.

Infestations were revealed by complaint or during routine inspections, and in most cases were investigated initially by your Sanitary Inspector.

Infestations were recorded at the following type of premises:-

Private Houses	-	21
Council Houses	-	7
Business Premises	-	3
Council Property	-	2
Schools	-	2



Baiting of the Town sewers was carried out during the year, the result and extent being as follows:-

Manholes baited	12	Bait taken	6
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The Council's refuse tip is situated within the area of the adjoining Rural District Council who also share the tipping facilities. By arrangement, the Rural District Council are responsible for, and attend to any rodent infestation that may occur at the tip.

#### THE HOUSING ACTS etc.

The Housing Survey was completed during the latter part of 1954, and, as was intended, has been the means of ascertaining those dwellings which cannot be repaired at reasonable expense and are unfit for human habitation.

During the year under review the problem of unfit houses has received its just attention, and as a result the action taken under Section 11 (Demolition of unfit houses) was as follows:-

Demolition Orders Made	11
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Closing Orders Made	4
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The Council are faced with many difficulties in dealing with the problem of unfit houses. A number of these houses are tenanted by elderly persons, who are content with their present conditions and furthermore would find the rent of another dwelling above their means. Other tenants wishing for more satisfactory accommodation are faced with the acute housing shortage.

A plan of action for the demolition and closure of unfit houses is however in operation, but there are still some 370 houses or so in need of repair which, if not soon attended to, will in many cases deteriorate rapidly to a state where such houses can only, from an economic aspect, be demolished.

#### Part IV Housing Act 1936.

One case of Statutory Overcrowding was found and recorded during the year. The family concerned found alternative accommodation of their own accord and no action was required by the Council in this instance. There were no other known or recorded cases of Statutory Overcrowding within the District.

#### General

16 Council Houses and 7 Private dwellings were completed during the year, there now being an approximate total of 1,324 inhabited dwellings within the district.

#### HOUSING REPAIRS AND RENTS ACT 1954

Part 11 There were no applications for certificates of Disrepair by tenants of houses where a landlord had claimed a repairs increase in rent. Such applications for a certificate can be made to the Council by a tenant who considers his house is not in sufficiently good condition to warrant an increase in rent under this Act. Where the Council are also of the same opinion they are required to issue a certificate of Disrepair to the Tenant.



## FACTORIES AND OUTWORKERS

During the year 10 inspections were made of premises registered as Factories under the Factories Act 1937. Conditions were found to be satisfactory except for one case when it was necessary to serve an informal notice requiring the cleansing of a sanitary convenience. This matter was remedied.

There were no known or recorded persons carrying on outwork within the District.

The prescribed particulars on the administration of, and as required by the Factories Act, is appended.

## SHOPS ACT 1950

The duties of the Council under this Act are restricted to enforcing those provisions of Section 38 which relate to the maintenance of suitable and efficient ventilation and a reasonable temperature in shops, and the provision of sanitary conveniences for persons employed in or about the shop. There were only 6 inspections of shops made specifically under this Act but the requirements were enforced at the same time as inspections of various types of shops were carried out for other purposes.

No contraventions were recorded.

## PETROLEUM ACTS 1928 & 1936

4 visits were made to premises at which Petroleum was being stored, no contraventions were recorded.

The number of licenses in force during the year was 30, and the approximate gallonage stored being 89,050.

## PET ANIMALS ACT 1951

2 licences were issued during the year, the requirements of the licences were complied with satisfactorily in each case.

## MILK, DAIRIES, AND FOOD PREMISES

There are 45 food premises, and an average of 7 food stalls within the District; they have generally been maintained at a reasonably hygienic standard.

59 inspections have been made of such premises during the year.

The new Food and Drugs Act 1955, and the Food Hygiene Regulations 1955, which will come into operation during the coming year, will, without doubt, require a higher standard of premises and personal hygiene than in the past.

## SECTION 14. FOOD AND DRUGS ACT 1938

7 premises where sausage and preserved food etc., is manufactured are registered under this section, as are 18 premises where ice cream is sold or manufactured. These premises were maintained in a satisfactory state during the year.

## MILK AND DAIRIES REGULATIONS 1949

Licences issued under the Milk (Special Designation)  
(Raw Milk) Regulations, 1949 ..... 4

Principal Dealers..... 1  
Supplementary Dealers..... 3

Licences issued under the Milk (Special Designation)  
(Pastourised and Sterilised Milk) Regulations, 1949.... 6

Principal Dealers..... 3  
Supplementary Dealers..... 3

## Inspections and Visits

59 visits were made to food premises and food stalls during the year. A further 8 visits were made for such things as the voluntary surrender by traders of unsound food in their possession.

## SAMPLING

The major sampling operations for chemical analysis are normally carried out by the Food and Drugs Authority who, in the case of this District, are the Norfolk County Council.

An authorised officer of the local authority may also purchase, or in certain cases take, samples of any food, and certain Drugs. Local Authorities, who are not also the Food and Drugs Authority, usually confine their sampling to certain foods for the purpose of bacteriological examination.

4 samples of Specially Designated milk were taken during the year and each sample satisfactorily complied with the methylene blue test.

8 samples of ice cream were taken for bacteriological examination. 6 samples were Grade 1. the other two samples being Grade 2 and classed as satisfactory

## VOLUNTARY SURRENDER OF FOOD

The following amounts of foodstuffs were surrendered by traders in the town and rejected as unfit for human consumption by your Sanitary Inspector. A certificate of Surrender was issued in each case and the foodstuffs were removed and properly disposed of.

Tinned Meat	...	...	...	75	lbs	12	ozs.
Tinned Fish	...	...	...	13	"	7	"
Tinned Fruit	...	...	...	80	"	9	"
Tinned Vegetables	...	...	...	44	"	6	"
Tinned Milk	...	...	...	34	Tins.		

## MEAT INSPECTION

A total of 210 visits were made to the slaughterhouse by your Sanitary Inspector during the year. Whilst the Council were without a Sanitary Inspector the work of Meat Inspection was carried out by Messrs. Loveless and Downe, Veterinary Surgeons, Diss.

Comparative figures of animals slaughtered are as follows:-

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>CATTLE</u>	<u>PIGS</u>	<u>SHEEP</u>	<u>CALVES</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1955	650	1,552	527	14	2,743
1954	999	2,450	1,698	323	5,470
1953	1,441	2,164	2,425	1,015	7,045
1952	1,549	1,891	1,866	1,165	6,461
1951	1,632	1,401	1,633	1,046	5,712
1939	645	2,213	735	132	3,725

The rejection of Meat and Offal reached its lowest ever, this being due to the reduction of animals slaughtered and also the improved quality of the beasts for slaughter.

Comparative amounts of meat and offal rejected are as follows:-

1955	1 ton	2 cwts.	2 qrs.	15 lbs.
1954	7 tons	18 cwts.	0 qrs.	5 lbs.
1953	12 tons	0 cwts.	2 qrs.	23 lbs.
1952	19 tons	11 cwts.	0 qrs.	0 lbs.
1951	17 tons	7 cwts.	0 qrs.	20 lbs.

I append a summary of the causes of rejection and it will be seen that Tuberculosis is still the main cause of rejection in cattle and pigs. Similarly rejections of offal due to parasitic affections account for the greater amount of offal rejected.

The method of the disposal of rejected material has continued as previously being collected by the Suffolk Fat and Bone Company Ltd., of Oulton Broad, for the reduction into fertilisers etc.

The staining of rejected meat with green dye has been continued.

#### REFUSE COLLECTION, DISPOSAL, AND SALVAGE.

##### Collection.

At the end of the year the number of premises from which refuse is collected was estimated at 1,295 and the number of bins to be emptied 1,390.

A 7 day collection in the District was maintained throughout the year, this to a large measure due to the conscientious support of the two men employed on the vehicle. During the period under review the refuse vehicle travelled a distance of some 3,343 miles, the number of loads being 583.

The volume of refuse placed in the bins for collection tends to increase, this may be due to the increasing tendency to sell food in prepacked cartons or packages and although the paper is still collected by this Council as Salvage, it is becoming more and more apparent in the general refuse.



## Disposal.

The tipping of refuse at the Roydon Tip was generally satisfactory during the year. As a result of the tipping facilities being shared with the adjoining Rural District Council, certain difficulties however arose, which the Chairman of the Council and the Clerk of the Council discussed with the owner, and later reported that an agreement had been attained.

The tracking material at the tip has proved to be most useful, permitting the vehicle to tip the refuse in the required position and further causing a certain amount of consolidation of the deposited refuse.

## Trade Refuse Collection.

The scheme for the collection of trade refuse was first put into operation during 1954.

The basis of this scheme is that all refuse collected from each business or premises in separate occupation shall be contained in standard size bins (up to  $3\frac{1}{4}$  cub.ft.) and in each case each bin over two put out for collection shall be charged at a rate of 6d per week. Those premises with over two bins being guaranteed a weekly collection.

This scheme has continued to operate satisfactorily during the year.

Authorisation is still given to persons wishing to deposit rubbish on the tip, provided the person authorised carries out certain simple requirements printed on the authorisation form. Varying charges were made for tipping facilities at the tip, from 1/-d for a casual load to 7/6d per quarter year for certain business concerns who wished to use the tip regularly.

## Salvage

I am pleased to report that there was a decided increase in the amount of paper salvage collected during the year, the result being an improved return from same compared with the three previous years.

Comparable figures are as follows:-

<u>Calendar Year</u>	<u>Waste Paper Sold</u>			<u>Approx. Value</u>
1955	42 tons.	9 cwt.	9 qrs.	£276
1954	32 tons.	18 cwt.	0 qrs.	£145
1953	30 tons.	6 cwt.	0 qrs.	£99
1952	26 tons.	12 cwt.	2 qrs.	£80
1951	41 tons.	8 cwt.	0 qrs.	£456

## Dustbin Hire Scheme.

Dustbins were supplied to 17 additional premises during the year and 1 bin previously supplied was renewed. The total number of premises supplied with dustbins under this scheme was 112 at the end of the year which represents a total of 120 dustbins on hire.

The scheme continued to work very smoothly and was much appreciated by those persons taking advantage of it.

GENERAL

I have the honour to present this report on behalf of my predecessor.

My predecessor Mr.E.D.E.Edwards terminated his service with the Council on the 5th August 1954, and it was not until 30 January 1956 that I commenced my duties.

I would like to take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation to the members of the Council, and Officers and staff of the Council, for the courtesy and help extended since my appointment to this Council.

I.C.Prowse.

Sanitary Inspector.

Diss Urban District Council.

# SUMMARY OF THE WORK OF SANITARY INSPECTION.

## A. GENERAL

Conservancy and Drainage	...	...	...	...	56
Factories	...	...	...	...	10
Game Licences	...	...	...	...	6
Pet Animals	...	...	...	...	1
Petroleum Acts...	...	...	...	...	4
Atmospheric Pollution...	...	...	...	...	9
Rodent Control...	...	...	...	...	38
Shops	...	...	...	...	6
Water Samples	...	...	...	...	16
Water Supplies...	...	...	...	...	23
With Medical Officer of Health	...	...	...	...	5
Swimming Pool	...	...	...	...	1
Miscellaneous Sanitary Visits	...	...	...	...	69

## B. HOUSING

Houses inspected under the Public Health Act	...	...	...	...	29
Houses inspected under the Housing Acts	...	...	...	...	20
Overcrowding	...	...	...	...	2
Re-visits to Houses	...	...	...	...	100
Tents, Vans, Sheds etc.	...	...	...	...	6
Miscellaneous Housing Visits...	...	...	...	...	47

## C. INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Miscellaneous Infectious Disease visits	...	...	...	...	3
Disinfections carried out	...	...	...	...	1

## D. FOOD PREMISES

Dairies and Milk Distributors	...	...	...	...	1
Food Premises including Market Stalls	...	...	...	...	59
Miscellaneous Food Visits	...	...	...	...	8

## E. SAMPLING

Ice Cream	...	...	...	...	8
Milk	...	...	...	...	4

## F. MEAT INSPECTION

Visits to slaughterhouse	...	...	...	...	210
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## G. REFUSE COLLECTION

Visits in connection with collection, Disposal and Salvage.	...	...	...	...	122
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TOTAL VISITS AND INSPECTIONS..... 864



# SUMMARY OF DEFECTS AND NUISANCES REMEDIED

## General

Accumulations removed .....	...	...	1
Dustbins supplied or renewed by owners etc. ....	...	...	33
Foul ditches cleansed .....	...	...	3

## Drainage

Drainage systems repaired or reconstructed .....	...	...	4
Obstructed drains cleared .....	...	...	4
Sinks provided .....	...	...	1
Water closets repaired .....	...	...	1

## Repairs to Dwellinghouses

Ceilings repaired - rooms .....	...	...	2
Dampness remedied - rooms .....	...	...	5
Doors and windows repaired .....	...	...	1
External walls repaired .....	...	...	1
Rainwater pipes and gutters repaired .....	...	...	1
Roof repaired .....	...	...	2
Internal walls repaired .....	...	...	2

## Water Supply

Internal water supply provided .....	...	...	1
Water supply improved .....	...	...	1

## PREScribed PARTICULARS REQUIRED BY SECTION 128 (3) FACTORIES ACT, 1937.

### 1. Inspections for purposes as to health:-

Premises	Number on Register.	Inspections	Number of Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
(i) Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4, and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities.....	1	1	-	-
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority.....	40	9	1	-
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers premises).....	3	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>

MEAT INSPECTION

Carcases and offal inspected and condemned in whole or  
in part.

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed	648	2	14	527	1,152
Number Inspected		90%			
<u>All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci</u> Whole carcasses condemned.	1	-	-	-	1
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned.	48	1	-	8	28
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis and cysticerci.	7	50	-	1	2
<u>Tuberculosis Only</u> Whole carcasses condemned.	-	-	-	-	-
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned.	32	-	-	-	26
Percentage of the number affected with Tuberculosis.	5	-	-	-	2

Total weight of Meat and Offal rejected 1 ton. 2 cwts. 2 qrs. 15 lbs.

No carcasses were found to be affected with Cysticercus Bovis during the year.

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

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1960

1961

1962

1963

1964

1965

1966

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